



Catholic Faith, Life & Creed

A Complete Catechesis for Christian Living

Doctrinal Catechesis Session Mary Birmingham

LIFE ISSUES



Alessandro Turchi detto l'Orbetto, *Christ and the Woman Taken into Adultery*. Oil on canvas, 108 x 147 cm. Private collection. 16th c. Released to the public domain.



Begin with the Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Opening prayer

Option 1: Use Opening Prayer from the Sunday liturgy.

Option 2: Use the prayer which is below.

Prayer of Pope Clement XI

Lord, I believe in you: increase my faith.

I trust in you: strengthen my trust.

I love you: let me love you more and more.

I am sorry for my sins: deepen my sorrow.

I worship you as my first beginning.

I long for you as my last end.

I praise you as my constant helper.

And I call you as my loving protector.

I want to do what you ask of me:

In the way you ask, for as long as you ask, because you ask it.

Let me love you Lord as my God.

And see myself as I really am: a pilgrim in this world.

A Christian called to respect and love all those lives I touch.

Note to the Catechist

There may be more material than you can use in a one-hour session.
Select and arrange accordingly. Use questions and material that is best suited for your particular group.



Read the connecting statement

to draw the line between this week's liturgy and this chosen doctrinal theme.

This connecting statement is found in the **Breaking Open the Word** worksheet for this week.

Catholic Faith, Life & Creed Version 2.0

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Version 2.0 reflects all recent revisions in the Roman Missal.

NIHIL OBSTAT
Rev. Steven Olds
Censor Liborum

IMPRIMATUR
† Most Rev. John Noonan
Bishop of Orlando

June 27, 2011

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Sharing Human Experience

Catechist begins this session by making the following key points:

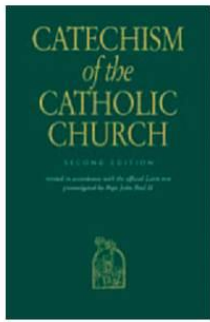
- ▶ In the Old Testament, life was intimately connected with God and creation.
- ▶ God is the source of all life.
- ▶ God created all living things.
- ▶ God blew into the nostrils of human beings making man and woman living beings.
- ▶ God is called the living God in order to emphasize his power over all creation.
- ▶ God is both the source of life and the one who protects and sustains life.
- ▶ In the Scriptures, life is associated with light, peace, blessing, health, victory, success, faithfulness, restoration to health, repentance, happiness, and longevity.
- ▶ Reaching old age was understood as a special blessing for a well-lived life.

Catechist invites participants to respond to the following questions in groups of four, then surfaces insights in the wider group. Respond to questions one and two first. Reflect in small group. Then share results in the larger group, before going on to questions three and four.

- ▶ Consider your life right now. Let us spend a few minutes being grateful for the abundant life we now possess.
- ▶ In what ways do you have what the Old Testament insists we are entitled to: a light-filled, peace-filled, blessed, healthy, victorious, successful, faithful, repentant, healed, and happy life?
- ▶ Do you believe, as the Scriptures suggest, that we are entitled to these things?
- ▶ If so, what does that say to us about those who do not have them?



“New Life” by Mark Hakomaki, 2008.



Sharing Catholic Doctrine

Drawn from the Catechism of the Catholic Church

Refer to articles 2268-83, 2322, 2264, 1706, and 2307-2316.

Catechist continues:

- ▶ The Church teaches that human beings have a right to a full and abundant life.
- ▶ God created each human being with an inherent dignity. We are created in the image of God. God made us and God saw that we are good, very good.
- ▶ When we sing, “Amazing grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me,” we don’t mean to suggest that God’s creatures are wretched. The alternate text provided by many publishers, “saved and set me free,” is more in harmony with Catholic theology. Genesis affirms the goodness of God’s creation, “and God saw that it was good.” Human beings are sinners, yes, wretched, never!
- ▶ God wants us to have the fullness of life. Jesus said, “I came that you might have the fullness of life, life in abundance.” Each person is created in the image and likeness of God and as such has a right to that fullness.
- ▶ Jesus, the Son of God, came to earth to save the human race. He died and rose again to save us from sin.
- ▶ Our liturgy tells us that he did something else for us as well. The prefaces of the Mass for Christmas and Epiphany tell us that we are made a little less than the angels. We are given a divine nature. We are made holy because Christ came to earth. When Christ came to earth, he sanctified all creation.
- ▶ Thus, if all creation is holy, we are to have a common regard for all creation, life from womb to tomb.

Catechist engages participants in a group discussion.

- ▶ How do you feel about Catholic teaching that tells us that all creation is holy, that we are created holy and good? Do you believe it? If so, what backs up your claim, if not, why not?
- ▶ How do you feel about the Church’s premise that since all creation is holy we are to have a common regard for all of creation, life from womb to tomb?

Catechist continues:

- ▶ The Fifth Commandment tells us we may not kill. Inherent in this commandment is the call to promote the physical, emotional, spiritual, and social well being of self and others. Murder, abortion, euthanasia, and life-threatening acts are forbidden.

- ▶ The New Testament also upholds the Old Testament's understanding of God as the source of life in all its dimensions. The New Testament understands life in terms of life in Christ. Jesus' life giving, healing ministry is symbolic of God's desire to save us from sin, evil, and death.
- ▶ The Church continues to promote a culture of life built on the foundation of Christ who is the source of all life. We are to promote the fullness of life from womb to the tomb. We are to foster a culture of life, not death.

Three principles should govern our thinking:

1. Human freedom does not supersede God's will and the natural moral law. In other words, we are not free to "do our own thing" when it goes against God's will and whatever is morally wrong. Our freedom does not free us from our responsibility to promote life in all its dimensions.
2. God is present in all creation. God is present in every human being. When we deny the presence of God in human beings, it is very easy to deny the basic human dignity of each person.
3. People must develop a moral conscience that rejects the relativism of God's laws, such as the Ten Commandments, Jesus' teachings (i.e. the Beatitudes), and the ongoing guidance of the Holy Spirit (United States Catholic Catechism for Adults, 390).

Catechist invites participants to respond to the following questions in groups of four, then surface insights in the wider group.

- ▶ We said earlier that even though God gave us freedom, we are not free to "do our own thing" when it goes against God's will and whatever is morally wrong. How do you feel about that? What are some ways we do our own thing, in other words, what are some ways that we choose to go against God's will or what is morally right?
 - For example, in a recent homily our pastor spoke to us of the sin of ignoring poor people and how he had a conversation with a man who told him it was not in his budget to help the poor.
 - Or, a young woman had an abortion because she was more concerned about her figure and did not want to be bothered with a pregnancy and above all, she could not tolerate the stretch marks it would leave.

Catechist continues:

- ▶ Our freedom does not free us from our responsibility to promote life in all its dimensions.
- ▶ What are the primary life issues of most concern to us today?

Murder

- ▶ The intentional taking of life is a most grievous offense except in the case of self-defense or the defense of others. “The deliberate killing of the aggressor can be permitted only when no other solution is possible” (CCC, 2265).
- ▶ The response to an aggressor must be proportionate to the nature of his aggressive action. In other words, if someone trips you and steals your purse, it would not be a proportionate response to shoot and kill them as they flee. On the other hand, if a man was poised to shoot another person to death and the only way to stop him was to kill that person, that would constitute the taking of a life in defense of another person; it would not be considered murder.

Abortion

- ▶ Abortion has always been condemned. It is a grave offense against the natural moral law. We must defend the human life from its very conception.
- ▶ Abortion is the taking of a human life and the Church teaches that life begins at conception.
- ▶ Our society has been debilitated by the legalization of abortion. Abortion has become so widespread that it has become another form of birth control.
- ▶ The Church has always protected the unborn. Early Church documents testify to the serious gravity of taking the life of an unborn child. The Church sees abortion as extremely sinful.
- ▶ However, part of the Church’s commitment to life includes the healing and reconciliation of those who have had abortions and the supportive assistance for those who are pregnant and in difficult situations.
- ▶ The Church encourages those who have had an abortion to seek the healing ministry of the Church and to avail themselves of the sacrament of penance and reconciliation. The healing this can accomplish in the individual is not to be underestimated.

Catechist shares stories of such healing. See the appendix #1 for several examples.

- ▶ The Church strives to be a support for women who feel they have no other options. Many good people embrace and support women who find themselves in the difficult situation of an unwanted pregnancy.

See appendix #2 for a story that highlights the implications and importance of providing support.

- ▶ If we seriously care about life issues and about abortion, then we also have to care about the structures that fail to respect life and that create circumstances in which abortion seems to be the only option (such as lack of access to medical care).
- ▶ A commitment to life does not simply mean that we are anti-abortion. It means we are willing to make it possible that life happens, that we work to change laws that keep the neediest from getting the help that they need.

- Pope John Paul II's encyclical *Evangelium vitae* speaks of life and all that stands in the way of life.

“Whatever is opposed to life itself, such as any type of murder, genocide, abortion, euthanasia, or willful self-destruction, whatever violates the integrity of the human person, such as mutilation, torments inflicted on body or mind, attempts to coerce the will itself; whatever insults human dignity, such as subhuman living conditions, arbitrary imprisonment, deportation, slavery, prostitution, the selling of women and children; as well as disgraceful working conditions, where people are treated as mere instruments of gain rather than as free and responsible persons; all these things and others like them are infamies indeed. They poison human society, and they do more harm to those who practice them than to those who suffer from the injury.”

Health Care

- Health care has been in the news a great deal of late. The United States bishops have taken a courageous stand in support of health care, reminding us that health care is a basic human right and not a privilege.
- Health care is a life issue. Provided the conditions set forth by the Church are met—such as a conscience clause that allows health care providers not to participate in abortion procedures—the Church is an advocate of health care for all of God's people.
- Health care is a human right that upholds basic human dignity.

Human Sexuality

- Pope John Paul II categorized issues surrounding human sexuality such as birth control under the umbrella of life (see *Evangelium vitae*). An entire session could be spent on dealing with such issues. Refer to the handout on sexual morality.

Note to catechist: Included in this session as a handout is a thorough catechism session on human sexuality from Fr. Eamon Tobin. We are using it with his permission. If time is an issue, the handout can be used as a guide in a separate session dealing with such issues, or it can simply be given to participants to read and reflect upon at their own leisure. Challenge them to respond to the reflection questions as they read the material. They could then be invited to bring any questions or concerns to the next gathering.

Stem Cell Research and Cloning

- Some scientists believe that using stem cells from embryos can cure certain diseases. To harvest the stem cells, the embryos must be killed. Some people believe that since stem cell research could result in the healing of serious illness, that the end justifies the means. The Church insists that it does not.
- Stem cells are also found in the placenta, the umbilical cord, and other parts of the body. Such cells are presently being used with promising results and are an acceptable alternative to using stem cells from the human embryo.

Euthanasia

- ▶ The intentional killing of someone to alleviate that person's sickness or disability is murder, regardless of how well intentioned.
- ▶ Physician-assisted-suicide and suicide in general is a serious sin.
- ▶ However, the Church acknowledges that mental disturbances, fears, suffering, and torture can reduce a person's responsibility when it comes to suicide.
- ▶ God's mercy extends beyond the grave so loved ones are to rely on God's merciful judgment.

End of Life Decisions

- ▶ The Church teaches that we can "discontinue medical procedures that are burdensome, extraordinary, and disproportionate to the outcome."
- ▶ That, however, does not include the withholding of food, water, warmth, and hygiene.
- ▶ Extreme measures are not required to keep someone alive.

The Death Penalty

- ▶ The Vatican, at an international conference on the death penalty held in Paris in early 2007, insisted upon "support for all initiatives that aim to defend the inherent value and inviolability of all human life, from conception to natural end." The statement continues: "In this perspective, it is worth noting that the use of the death penalty is not just a negation of the right to life, but also an affront to human dignity."
- ▶ An interesting note: Jesus stopped a death penalty in progress when he challenged the judges and the executioners of the woman caught in adultery.
- ▶ The Church recognizes the right of the state to protect its citizens against crime and to punish the perpetrators.
- ▶ The statement by the Vatican insists that it is difficult to justify any use of it today. There are other means of protecting society that maintain and uphold the dignity of the human person.
- ▶ There is something wrong with teaching society that killing is wrong by "killing those who kill other people" (United States Catholic Catechism for Adults, 395).
- ▶ The death penalty negates the basic human right to life, and it is an assault on human dignity.
- ▶ The Church today echoes St Augustine who spoke against the death penalty in the fourth century when he insisted that it denied the person the time needed to repent of his or her sin and turn to God.
- ▶ The Vatican also insisted that the inherent danger of using the death penalty includes punishing those who are innocent and utilizing violent forms of revenge.
- ▶ The Vatican also stated that the death penalty is "a clear offense against the inviolability of human life, and, for Christians, an affront to the evangelical teaching of forgiveness" (Speech given to Paris Congress on the death penalty).
- ▶ "The universal abolition of the death penalty would be a courageous reaffirmation of the belief that humankind can be successful in dealing with criminality and of our refusal to succumb to despair before such forces, and as

such it would regenerate new hope in our very humanity” (Declaration of the Holy See to the First World Congress on the Death Penalty, 2001).

War

- ▶ We safeguard against war when we promote peace and let go of hatred.
- ▶ Peace involves mutual respect and collaboration between peoples and nations.
- ▶ We promote peace when we work to eliminate poverty, oppression and the devaluation of human life, dignity, and rights. We promote peace when we encourage disarmament.
- ▶ The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches that the arms race is “one of the greatest curses on the human race and the harm that it inflicts on the poor is more than can be endured” (2329).
- ▶ While every possible action should be taken to avoid war, the Church sets forth a just cause theory of war.
- ▶ For a war to have just cause, “the damage inflicted by the aggressor on the nation or community of nations (must be) lasting, grave and certain.” There must be a clear and adequate evidence of a direct and imminent attack of a grave nature (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2309).
- ▶ Legitimate authority: The moral credibility of the use of military force also depends heavily on whether there is legitimate authority for using force. For example compliance with U.S. constitutional imperatives, broad consensus, international sanction.
- ▶ Probability of success and proportionality: The use of force must have “serious prospects for success” and “must not produce evils and disorders graver than the evil to be eliminated” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2309).
- ▶ Serious consideration must be given to how the war would impact the civilian population, in the short- and long-term.
- ▶ War is to be undertaken for purposes of self-defense, never vengeance and for the purposes of restoring order and justice.

Other issues

- ▶ Those who are conscientious objectors should be given the opportunity to serve their country in other ways.
- ▶ Ethnic cleansing is an intrinsic moral evil.
- ▶ The use of nuclear weapon on a population center is reprehensible and no circumstance warrants its use.

Terrorism

- ▶ We are never to condone acts of terrorism and violence.
- ▶ On the other hand, we are to work diligently to overcome conditions that lead to it such as poverty, oppression, and in justice.

Implications

- ▶ A key to embracing all these issues is to believe what the Church teaches: Christ is present in every living thing. Whether unborn, deserving, or undeserving, God is present in all created beings.
- ▶ Commitment to life insists that we look beyond the person and see them as God sees them, a life precious to save, a life that is entitled to the fullness of life, a life that is entitled to be born, a life that is encouraged to repent, a life entitled to the comfort of food, water, and warmth at life's end, a life that is treasured from first breath to last.



Community Connections

Catechists invite participants to respond to the following questions.

- ▶ Of all the issues just presented, which do you find most challenging? What obstacles keep people from embracing the Church's teaching on life from womb to tomb?
- ▶ Which issue do you find the most difficult to accept?
- ▶ What would it take for you to embrace it?
- ▶ Do any of the issues presented speak to an experience in your life?
- ▶ How might God be challenging you when it comes to today's liturgy and this teaching?

Catechist informs the group of any parish activity taking place and makes arrangements for group participation. For example, in light of all that was shared, what is taking place in the parish or local community that invites participation of the participants? For example, perhaps individuals might volunteer in a crisis pregnancy center in the area or our parish social concerns center. "Our group is meeting at daily bread to serve the meal, and then we will reflect on our experience afterward."



Mystagogy & your decision for change

- How has God spoken to you today? In what way, if any, does today's liturgy and doctrinal session invite change in your life: an attitude, a behavior? What might God be asking of you in response to today's reflection?

Journal

Respond to the following questions in your journal throughout the week: How might you start promoting a culture of life in your own environment?



Closing Prayer

Pray Jeremiah 1: 5-9:

Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you. Before you were born, I dedicated you, a prophet to the nations I appointed you. "Ah, LORD God!" I said, "I know not how to speak; I am too young." But the LORD answered me; Say not, "I am too young." To whomever I send you, you shall go; whatever I command you, you shall speak. Have no fear before them, because I am with you to deliver you, says the LORD. Then the LORD extended his hand and touched my mouth, saying, See, I place my words in your mouth! (NAB)

Concluding Prayer

Lord God, you who formed us in our mother's womb
And who set us above all created things
Sent your Son to save the world,
Because of so great a gift, all creation is graced.
You give us life in abundance
And have created every person in your image
And with utmost dignity.
You have called us to be a prophetic voice in our world.
Strengthen us and send us forth to speak your truth
And advocate for life in all of its forms, from womb to tomb.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Intercessions and Sign of Peace

Appendix

STORIES RELATED TO THE CHURCH'S HEALING MINISTRY IN RELATION TO ABORTION

1. My sister's best friend had a very abusive childhood that led to severe acting out in her late teens and early adult years. She got pregnant several times and subsequently aborted the babies. As she sought the reconciliation of God through the ministry of the Church, she became an incredible advocate for life and today reaches out to women who feel trapped by pregnancy.

She later married and now has a beautiful family. Once her children reached a mature age, she told them what she had done with being a young, confused, out-of-control person. Every night at the dinner table, when they offer their family prayers, they pray for the children who are now in heaven with God. She prays that her children never go down the path she had chosen.

This woman also adopted a child from Africa. She has been an advocate for life from womb to tomb throughout her life.

2. Another friend has a similar background. She too got pregnant as a young person and had an abortion. She later got pregnant again, and because she simply could not take the life of that child, she gave the child up for adoption.

She too married and had three beautiful daughters. She experienced incredible healing through the ministry of the Church and the reconciling presence of Christ in her life. She too is an advocate for life.

An amazing thing recently happened to her. She received a letter from the daughter that she had given up for adoption. The daughter had been looking for her birth mother for years.

Wonderful parents adopted this baby girl so many years before. She had a young daughter of her own and was a very capable, level headed, successful, well-adjusted young woman who was simply searching for her origins.

My friend was reunited with her daughter. She discovered she had another granddaughter. Her three daughters found they had another sister. Together they all began to forge new relationships. It has been a miracle of epic proportions in their lives. God is a God of life and of restored relationships.

3. It is important to remember, however, that sometimes those safety nets are not always there. We as the People of God need to take a more active role in helping women who feel that abortion is their only option. One young woman was experiencing a dangerous, high-risk pregnancy; she was carrying twins. The father of the children abandoned her. She could not work because of the high-risk situation. She needed a high-risk specialist. She made too much money the previous year to qualify for medical assistance, and her insurance did not have pregnancy benefits.

The family contacted their local diocesan office in a south central state seeking help. The office was told that this young woman was contemplating abortion since there were no apparent options available to her. The response of the Family Life Office was to tell her that all they could do to help her was to give her baby clothes. They then referred her to the state. The state insisted she could not be helped because the previous year she had made too much money.

Most young women, having reached a roadblock at the level of the Church and the state, would have had an abortion. If it had not been for a loving, supportive, family that nurtured her and did what they could to help her (her medical bills ended up exceeding a half million dollars), she very likely would have been one of those people. She was in a hopeless, life-threatening situation.

It is up to God's people to support the work of agencies (such as Project Rachel) committed to helping young women receive the care they need.

Life Issues Handout

- ▶ The Church teaches that human beings have a right to a full and abundant life.
- ▶ God created each human being with an inherent dignity. We are created in the image of God. God made us and God saw that we are good, very good.
- ▶ When we sing, “Amazing grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me,” we don’t mean to suggest that God’s creatures are wretched. The alternate text provided by many publishers, “saved and set me free,” is more in harmony with Catholic theology. Genesis affirms the goodness of God’s creation, “and God saw that it was good.” Human beings are sinners, yes, wretched, never!
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- ▶ Jesus, the Son of God, came to earth to save the human race. He died and rose again to save us from sin.
- ▶ Our liturgy tells us that he did something else for us as well. The prefaces of the Mass for Christmas and Epiphany tell us that we are made a little less than the angels. We are given a divine nature. We are made holy because Christ came to earth. When Christ came to earth, he sanctified all creation.
- ▶ Thus, if all creation is holy, we are to have a common regard for all creation, life from womb to tomb.
- ▶ The Fifth Commandment tells us we may not kill. Inherent in this commandment is the call to promote the physical, emotional, spiritual, and social wellbeing of self and others. Murder, abortion, euthanasia, and life-threatening acts are forbidden.
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laws, such as the Ten Commandments, Jesus' teachings (i.e. the Beatitudes), and the ongoing guidance of the Holy Spirit (United States Catholic Catechism for Adults, 390).

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- ▶ A commitment to life does not simply mean that we are anti-abortion. It means we are willing to make it possible that life happens, that we work to change laws that keep the neediest from getting the help that they need.

- ▶ Pope John Paul II's encyclical *Evangelium vitae* speaks of life and all that stands in the way of life.

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- ▶ Health care has been in the news a great deal of late. The United States bishops have taken a courageous stand in support of health care, reminding us that health care is a basic human right and not a privilege.
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- ▶ An interesting note: Jesus stopped a death penalty in progress when he challenged the judges and the executioners of the woman caught in adultery.
- ▶ The Church recognizes the right of the state to protect its citizens against crime and to punish the perpetrators.
- ▶ The statement by the Vatican insists that it is difficult to justify any use of it today. There are other means of protecting society that maintain and uphold the dignity of the human person.
- ▶ There is something wrong with teaching society that killing is wrong by "killing those who kill other people" (United States Catholic Catechism for Adults, 395).
- ▶ The death penalty negates the basic human right to life, and it is an assault on human dignity.
- ▶ The Church today echoes St Augustine who spoke against the death penalty in the fourth century when he insisted that it denied the person the time needed to repent of his or her sin and turn to God.
- ▶ The Vatican also insisted that the inherent danger of using the death penalty includes punishing those who are innocent and utilizing violent forms of revenge.
- ▶ The Vatican also stated that the death penalty is "a clear offense against the inviolability of human life, and, for Christians, an affront to the evangelical teaching of forgiveness" (Speech given to Paris Congress on the death penalty).
- ▶ "The universal abolition of the death penalty would be a courageous reaffirmation of the belief that humankind can be successful in dealing with criminality and of our refusal to succumb to despair before such forces, and as

such it would regenerate new hope in our very humanity” (Declaration of the Holy See to the First World Congress on the Death Penalty, 2001).

War

- ▶ We safeguard against war when we promote peace and let go of hatred.
- ▶ Peace involves mutual respect and collaboration between peoples and nations.
- ▶ We promote peace when we work to eliminate poverty, oppression and the devaluation of human life, dignity, and rights. We promote peace when we encourage disarmament.
- ▶ The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches that the arms race is “one of the greatest curses on the human race and the harm that it inflicts on the poor is more than can be endured” (2329).
- ▶ While every possible action should be taken to avoid war, the Church sets forth a just cause theory of war.
- ▶ For a war to have just cause, “the damage inflicted by the aggressor on the nation or community of nations (must be) lasting, grave and certain.” There must be a clear and adequate evidence of a direct and imminent attack of a grave nature (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2309).
- ▶ Legitimate authority: The moral credibility of the use of military force also depends heavily on whether there is legitimate authority for using force. For example compliance with U.S. constitutional imperatives, broad consensus, international sanction.
- ▶ Probability of success and proportionality: The use of force must have “serious prospects for success” and “must not produce evils and disorders graver than the evil to be eliminated” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2309).
- ▶ Serious consideration must be given to how the war would impact the civilian population, in the short- and long-term.
- ▶ War is to be undertaken for purposes of self-defense, never vengeance and for the purposes of restoring order and justice.

Other issues

- ▶ Those who are conscientious objectors should be given the opportunity to serve their country in other ways.
- ▶ Ethnic cleansing is an intrinsic moral evil.
- ▶ The use of nuclear weapon on a population center is reprehensible and no circumstance warrants its use.

Terrorism

- ▶ We are never to condone acts of terrorism and violence.
- ▶ On the other hand, we are to work diligently to overcome conditions that lead to it such as poverty, oppression, and in justice.

Implications

- ▶ A key to embracing all these issues is to believe what the Church teaches: Christ is present in every living thing. Whether unborn, deserving, or undeserving, God is present in all created beings.
- ▶ Commitment to life insists that we look beyond the person and see them as God sees them, a life precious to save, a life that is entitled to the fullness of life, a life that is entitled to be born, a life that is encouraged to repent, a life entitled to the comfort of food, water, and warmth at life's end, a life that is treasured from first breath to last.